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Page 4

Passive smoking risk 'misplaced'

PASSIVE smoking does not pose a significant cancer risk, according to a controversial report published by a team of leading scientists yesterday.

The finding, based on an analysis of 48 studies published worldwide, contradicts the widely-held view that inhaling other people's tobacco smoke is dangerous.

It could also have important implications for the regulation of smoking in public places.

The research was carried out by a working group of European experts on molecular biology, genetics, and statistics. They concluded that previous thinking about the hazards of environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), based on experiments with laboratory rats, was misplaced.

Earlier studies had also been prone to distortion due to statistical bias, it was claimed.

However, anti-smoking campaigners were quick to point out that the study was sponsored by three major tobacco companies, Philip Morris Europe, British-American Tobacco, and Rothmans International.

They also emphasised that the study ignores harmful effects other than cancer, like bronchitis.

The scientists insist they maintained a strictly neutral stance throughout. Professor Jeffrey Idle, who chaired the working group, said he only agreed to set up the research on the strict understanding that, even if the results were unfavourable to tobacco interests, they would be published in full.

A Swedish tobacco company is using 1000 smokers to test a new cigarette which is claimed to emit around 80% less smoke by heating tobacco instead of burning it.

Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/kzgj0001